DAWN

KARACHI Monday, January 5, 2026

METRO South

KARACHI

Sunset	05:57pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow)	07:16am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum	13°C
Maximum	26°C
Humidity	73%
Outlook	Sunny

Root, Brook lift England to 211-3 after early jolts at rain-hit SCG

Pg.18 SPORT

Suspect held for killing woman, her three kids

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Police on Sunday claimed to have arrested a man for his alleged involvement in killing a woman and her three children.

Partially decomposed bodies of Anila, 35, her two sons, Husain Ali, 12, and Konain Ali, 10, and daughter Kishwara Zehra, 13, were found in a pit off Karachi's Mai Kolachi Road on Friday night.

A statement by the office of Sindh Home Minister Ziaul Hasan Lanjar identified the prime suspect as Masroor Hussain Bangash, who was arrested by the Keamari police.

South DIG Asad Raza told *Dawn* that digital forensics of the mobile phone of deceased Anila had established that the held suspect had been in contact with her.

He said that the suspect and the deceased woman had been friends for a long time. "He wanted to get rid of her," the DIG said.

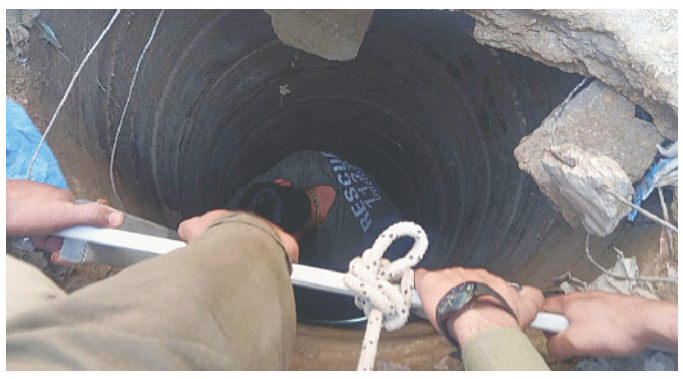
Police also shared a video of the suspect, in which he said she had been using black magic and would often make demands, due to which he was under mental pressure.

"She would take me to people who practice black magic," he alleged, adding that she had taken him to one such individual on Tuesday night as well.

He said he had decided by then that "either I will kill myself or her", adding that he killed her and then dumped the body in a pit.

The suspect added that he then went to her mother's house, took her children — who too would often make demands and "pressurise" him — killed them and dumped their bodies in the same pit.

He said he killed them because they had seen him leaving the house with their mother.



(CLOCKWISE from left) A policeman and rescue worker remove the slab from the drain; another hands a searchlight to a diver, who enters the sewer with the help of ropes to rescue five members of a family in Korangi's Mehran Town.—PPI

Tragedy averted after five pulled from manhole in Mehran Town

Two women, teenage girl and boy fall into 50-foot-deep sewer after its cover collapsed

By Imtiaz Ali

KARACHI: A big tragedy was averted when five members of a family, including a teenage girl and a minor boy, fell into a 50-foot-deep manhole in Korangi's Mehran Town area but were pulled out alive, officials said on Sunday.

They said that the incident took place at around 1pm when several people were about to board a bus to go to a wedding ceremony.

The officials said the bus was parked at the corner of the street with one of its wheels resting on the slabs and lid of a manhole. When people began boarding the vehicle, the RCC structure could not support their weight and collapsed, causing two women and as many children to fall into the manhole.

Seeing this, their host, Azam Kohati, jumped into the drain to rescue the women and children, but he too got trapped.

Korangi Industrial Area SHO Nasir Mehmood said that area people, along with a team of local police station, rushed to the scene and rescued the five with the help of ladders and ropes. "They sustained minor injuries and were taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre for treatment," he added.

However, a Rescue-1122 spokesperson said that their central command and control received the incident alert and it immediately despatched a water rescue team and trained divers to the site.

"The team carried out a rapid operation and rescued all five affected individuals, who were heading to attend a wedding ceremony," he said.

He said that the rescuers first pulled out Kohati, then the two women and the children. They were provided first aid on the spot and then shifted to the JPMC for further treatment.

The spokesperson identified the victims as Dilshad Shaukat, 40, Shamim, 55, Mariam Khan Mohammed, 15, and Usman, 12.

One of the women rescued from the drain was reported to be in critical condition, the spokesperson added.

He said that the drain was around 50-100 feet deep.

Deputy mayor takes notice

Deputy Mayor Salman Abdullah Murad took notice of the incident and confirmed the rescue of all five family members.

"The affected individuals were safely pulled out of the drain," he said, adding that Rescue 1122 teams were promptly sent to the location and carried out the operation efficiently.

He added that the protection of human lives was the top priority of the municipal administration and appreciated the timely coordination and cooperation of emergency response agencies during the incident.

A week ago, an eight-year-old boy fell in an open manhole while playing outside his Mehran Town home and drowned.

Earlier in December, a three-year-old boy, Ibrahim, also fell into an open manhole in Gulshan-i-Iqbal. His body was recovered more than 15 hours after the incident was first reported.

According to the Edhi Foundation, 27 people had lost their lives after falling into open manholes and drains in the metropolis in 2025.

Four suspected robbers gunned down in 'encounters'

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Four suspected robbers were gunned down in two alleged encounters in the metropolis on Sunday, officials said.

Central SSP Zeeshan Shafiq Siddiqi told *Dawn* that armed robbers entered a house in North Karachi Sector A-1/15 on Sunday morning. They held the residents hostage at gunpoint and started looting gold, cash and other valuables.

He said a neighbour informed the police about the happenings. Acting on that, police rushed to the spot and encountered the suspects as they were coming out of the house after committing the robbery.

On seeing the police, the suspects opened fire, and in the ensuing exchange of gunfire, three suspects were gunned down on the spot, while the fourth was arrested in an injured condition.

The looted gold, cash and other valuables were recovered from their custody. Two pistols and two motorcycles were also seized, the officer added.

The bodies and the injured suspect were shifted to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for medico-legal formalities.

Police surgeon Dr Summaiya Syed told *Dawn* that three suspects were brought dead to the hospital, where their post-mortem examinations were conducted.

She added that one of the deceased, identified as Yasir, 30, sustained a single gunshot wound to the abdomen. The two other suspects, aged between 40 and 45, remained unidentified and had sustained multiple bullet injuries.

The SSP said that police had obtained the past criminal record of the injured suspect. He had previously been arrested in a dacoity case by Sachal police and had been sent to prison.

In the second incident, a suspected robber was killed in an alleged encounter in New Karachi within the remit of the Bilal Colony police station.

The area police said that some robbers were looting passers-by near 4-K Chowrangi when a police patrol arrived at the scene and challenged them.

They said that the robbers opened fire and police retaliated, killing one of the. His two accomplices managed to escape.

The police said that a passer-by, identified as Junaid Khan, 22, also suffered injuries. He was taken to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for treatment.

Mayor inaugurates Rs900m solar-powered street light project on Sharea Faisal

Claims the scheme will save Rs25m annually in electricity bills; slams 'unnecessary controversy' over removal of conocorpus

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: City Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Sunday inaugurated the Rs900 million project for converting the street lights of Sharea Faisal to solar energy as part of a plan to illuminate three major arteries through environmentally friendly and cost-effective energy that will "save Rs25m in electricity bills" every year.

Under this project, the same company installing the solar panels will be responsible for their operations and maintenance, with a five-year warranty.

Addressing the ceremony at Sharea Faisal, the mayor said that "2026 will be the year of development, and every promise made to the people during the elections will be fulfilled".

"Public welfare projects are underway in Keamari, the Old City area and other parts of the city. Work is progressing rapidly on Shahrah-i-Bhutto, Murghi Khana Bridge, and other major projects, while Shahrah-i-Bhutto from Qayyumabad to Kathore will soon be opened to traffic," he said.

"This will benefit not only Karachi but also commuters travelling to Multan, Sialkot, Lahore and Hyderabad.

"Street lights on three major arteries of Karachi have been shifted to a solar system, including Sharea Faisal and Shahrah-i-Iran. Under this project, completed at a cost of Rs900m, the company installing the solar panels will be responsible for operation and maintenance with a five-year warranty, resulting in an annual saving of approximately Rs25m in electricity bills."

He highlighted that Sir Shah Suleman Road, Mai Kolachi Road and other major roads will also be shifted to solar energy.

In the past, he said, street lights used to remain switched off due to K-Electric's load-shedding, and allegations of failure were levelled against the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC); however, this issue has now been "resolved" through practical measures.

'Conocarpus trees neither eco-friendly nor suitable'

The mayor stated that conocarpus trees are neither environment-friendly nor suitable for infrastructure, yet unnecessary controversy is created over their removal.

The real need, he emphasised, is the plantation of indigenous trees, which are beneficial for the environment, soil, and public health.

Mr Wahab said that press conferences, protests and negative politics do not solve problems. Had press conferences been the solution, he remarked, the city's issues would have been resolved long ago.

He said that Jamaat-i-Islami should compete through practical work instead of conspiracies and hypocrisy.

He added that "everyone wants to become" a mayor or a minister, but these positions are a crown of thorns — the real test lies in serving the public.

Conspiracies have achieved nothing in the past and will achieve nothing in the future; the only path forward is service, tolerance and practical work.

Cities move forward through hard work and public service, not through conflicts and baseless allegations.

The mayor further said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) believes in action, not slogans.

The party's vision is to provide facilities to the people of Karachi without discrimination and to continue serving the public in line with the commitments of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari.

He claimed that the KMC is carrying out development works across the city without bias, aiming to move forward along with all stakeholders.

He noted that Bahadurabad Road has been completed, while improvement works are ongoing at Pakistan Chowk, Shahrah-i-Liaquat, and Sohrab Goth.

Work is in progress on the Kareemabad Underpass, and once K-Electric completes its work, the pace of construction will be further accelerated.

Teenager shot dead by robbers in New Karachi

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A teenage boy was shot dead by robbers in New Karachi on Sunday evening, police and rescue service officials said.

They identified the victim as 18-year-old Saad Jawed and said that he was shot and killed when he resisted a robbery bid near Rizwan Masjid in Sector-5-L within the remit of the Bilal Colony police station.

Area SHO Anwar Ali said that initial investigations suggested that two robbers riding a motorcycle killed the teenager.

The body was shifted to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for a post-mortem examination.

Study calls for regulating flavour chemicals in nicotine pouches

Existing research shows flavours can lead young people to try tobacco and nicotine products for first time, says co-author Dr Welding

By Faiza Ilyas

KARACHI: As global sales for oral nicotine pouches continue to increase, an analysis of the products sold in Karachi has revealed a wide variety of unregulated flavour chemicals, often combined with menthol.

The study was conducted by researchers from the Institute for Global Tobacco Control (IGTC) at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Portland State University, and published in the peer-reviewed journal Tobacco Control.

It called for regulating nicotine pouch ingredients, their sale, marketing and promotion, to prevent widespread addiction.

For the study, researchers procured 10 brand variants of nicotine pouches of a multinational tobacco corporation in 2022. Data collectors recorded the purchase price and photographed each package. The pouches were chemically analysed for nicotine and 180 individual flavour chemicals.

According to researchers, the work provides policymakers with potential targets that can help reduce use and improve the health of Pakistanis all over the country.

"Existing research across all tobacco and nicotine products shows that flavours can drive consumer interest and lead young people to try these products for the first time," said Dr Kevin Welding, associate director at IGTC and a co-author of the study. "The use of such a wide variety of levels and combinations of flavours raise concerns about expanding the nicotine market to young people."

Oral nicotine pouches are small pouches filled with powdered nicotine that can be placed in the mouth, between the gum and upper lip, where the nicotine can be readily absorbed into the bloodstream.

Nicotine pouches commonly include a variety of flavour chemicals, filler material, other additives, and also have a range of nicotine strengths. The most popular brands globally are primarily manufactured by multinational tobacco corporations.

The analyses found measurable levels of flavour chemicals across all brand variants, and detected benzyl alcohol (cherry flavour), menthol, terpineol (cardamom flavour), and carvone (a mint flavour) in all 10 products.

The researchers found a wide variation in the levels of fruit, menthol, and non-menthol / mint flavour chemicals across products, suggesting that producing a spectrum of flavour chemical levels and combinations is a central component of marketing brand variants.

"To help improve the health of Pakistanis, we need to shrink the markets for nicotine products — even while the tobacco industry devises new ways to expand these markets," said Syed Ali Wasif Naqvi from the Sustainable Development Policy Institute. "Flavour chemicals offer a target for policies that can be applied broadly and fairly, and we should consider how the regulation of flavours and ingredients in tobacco and nicotine products can help safeguard everyone's health."

Regulation of flavoured nicotine and tobacco products — and nicotine pouches in general — varies widely across the world. In Pakistan, the sale, marketing, and promotion of nicotine pouches is largely unregulated, and flavoured nicotine and tobacco products (including pouches) are not restricted.

In Pakistan, according to Euromonitor (a British market research company), "Volume sales of nicotine pouches are substantial," with a multinational company commanding the largest brand market share of smokeless tobacco (including nicotine pouches), e-cigarette, and heated tobacco products in 2023, at 52.4 per cent (an increase of more than double from 2021, at 25.6 percent).

"These findings align with previous IGTC studies in Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, where flavour chemical engineering was shown to support broader tobacco marketing strategies," Dr Welding added.

"While policies addressing nicotine pouches have found traction in some European and Central Asian countries, Pakistan and the Southeast and South Asian markets have remained fertile ground for these products.

"Regulating both flavour chemicals and nicotine levels in oral nicotine pouches are powerful policy options to prevent widespread addiction."